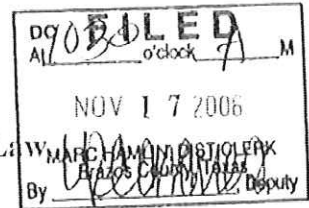




BRAZOS COUNTY LOCAL RULES OF ADMINISTRATION

Adopted November 16, 2006

Effective January 1, 2007



In the District Courts and County Courts at Law
Brazos County, Texas

**ORDER ADOPTING
BRAZOS COUNTY LOCAL RULES OF ADMINISTRATION**

On November 16th, 2006, the Judges of the District Courts and County Courts at Law in Brazos County, Texas, met and reviewed the existing Brazos County Local Rules of Administration. After consideration, the Judges approved amendments to the existing rules and adopted the attached rules as the Brazos County Local Rules of Administration, to become effective January 1st, 2007.

IT IS THEREFORE ORDERED that this order and the attached Brazos County Local Rules of Administration shall be immediately posted on the Brazos County District Clerk's website, and a copy transmitted to each attorney currently on any court-appointed attorney list by electronic or regular mail.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that a copy of this order and the attached rules be posted in the public access area in the District Clerk's Office and at the courtroom door of each District Court and County Court at Law.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the District Clerk shall provide to any person upon request a copy of this order and the attached Brazos County Local Rules of Administration.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that this order and the attached Brazos County Local Rules of Administration shall be transmitted to the Presiding Judge of the Second Administrative Judicial Region of Texas for his consideration.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that, if approved by the Presiding Judge of the Second Administrative Judicial Region of Texas, the attached Brazos County Local Rules of Administration shall be transmitted to the Supreme Court of Texas for its consideration.


IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that, if approved by the Supreme Court of Texas, the attached Brazos County Local Rules of Administration shall become effective on January 1st, 2007, or the date approved by the Supreme Court of Texas, whichever is later.

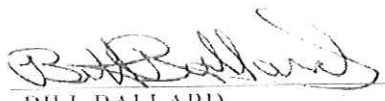
ADOPTED on November 16th, 2007.


J. D. LANGLEY
Presiding Judge
85th District Court


STEVE SMITH
Presiding Judge
361st District Court


RICK DAVIS
Presiding Judge
272nd District Court


JAMES W. LOCKE
Presiding Judge
County Court at Law No. 2


BILL BALLARD
Presiding Judge
County Court at Law No. 1



AMANDA MATZKE
Judge-elect
County Court at Law No. 1

Table of Contents

Rule 1	General Provisions	1
1.10	Time Standards for Case Disposition	1
1.11	Terms of Court; Annual Calendars; Weeks Not in Session; Holidays	1
1.11a	Terms of Court; Weeks Not in Session	1
1.11b	Annual Calendars	1
1.11b(1)	District Courts	1
1.11b(2)	County Courts at Law	1
1.11b(3)	Magistrates, Referees, and Court Masters	1
1.11c	Holidays	1
1.12	Hours of Court Proceedings	1
1.13	Emergency and Special Sessions	1
1.14	Jury/Non-jury Weeks	1
1.14a	District Courts	1
1.14b	County Courts at Law	1
 Rule 2	 Local Administrative Judge	 2
2.10	Powers and Duties of Local Administrative Judge	2
2.11	Information of Local Administrative Judge	2
2.12	Exercise of Powers in Absence	2
 Rule 3	 Civil Cases	 2
3.10	Filing and Assignment of Cases	2
3.10a	Cases within Exclusive Jurisdiction of the County Courts at Law	2
3.10b	Cases within Exclusive Jurisdiction of the District Courts	2
3.10c	Concurrent Civil Jurisdiction Cases	2
3.10d	Assignment of Cases	2
3.11	Filing on Holidays	3
3.12	Transfer of Cases; Docket Exchange; Bench Exchange	3
3.13	Request for Settings—Non-Jury	3
3.13a	Submission for Ruling without Hearing	3
3.13b	Contested Hearings	4
3.13c	Telephone Hearings	5
3.14	Disposition of Uncontested Matters	5
3.15	Request for Setting—Jury	5

3.16	Jury Fee and Jury Demand	5
3.17	Docket Calls and Announcements	5
3.18	Assignment of Cases for Trial	5
3.19	Conflicting Settings and Assignments of Counsel	6
3.19a	Attorney already in trial in another court	6
3.19b	Attorney assigned to two courts for the same date	6
3.20	Preferential Settings	6
3.21	Resettings	6
3.22	Dismissal Docket; Involuntary Dismissal	7
3.23	Suspense Docket	7
3.24	Hearings of Pre-trial Pleas and Motions	7
3.25	Attorney Conference Requirement and Procedures	7
3.26	Non-compliance with Conference Procedures	7
3.27	Discovery Disputes	7
3.28	Severances	7
3.29	Continuances	7
3.30	Default Judgments	7
3.31	Summary Judgments	7
3.32	Ancillary Proceedings	7
3.33	Complex Case Designation	7
3.34	Alternative Dispute Resolution	8
3.35	Pre-Trial and Scheduling Conferences	8
3.36	Certificate of Progress; Proposed Preparation Plan	8
3.37	Trial Stipulations and Admissions	8
3.38	Trial Witnesses and Exhibits	8
3.39	Disposition Conferences	8
3.40	Settlements	8
3.41	Jury Selection	8
3.42	Jury Charge, Questions and Instructions	8
3.43	Submission of Orders, Judgments and Instruments	8
3.44	Withdrawal and Copying of Documents	9
3.45	Other Local Rules	9

Rule 4	Family Law Cases	9
4.10	Time Standards for Family Law Case Disposition	9
4.11	Ancillary Proceedings, Temporary Orders, and Emergency Matters	9
4.12	Disposition Proposals	9
4.13	Uncontested Matters	9
4.14	Financial Information Statements	10
4.15	Child Support Guidelines	10
4.16	Possessory Conservator Visitation Guidelines	10
Rule 5	Liquidated Claims	
5.10	Liquidated Monetary Claims	10
5.11	Certification for Suspense Docket	10
5.12	Application to Defer Entry of Judgment	10
5.13	Certification that Payment Agreement Continues in Effect	10
Rule 6	Criminal Cases	11
6.10	Felony and Misdemeanor Cases	11
6.10a	Pre-Filings Documents	11
6.10b	Transfer of Cases	11
6.11	Grand Jury	12
6.12	Filings/Return of Indictments	12
6.13	Arraignment/Initial Appearance	13
6.14	Appointment of Counsel	13
6.15	Appearance of Defendant and Counsel/Court Attendance	13
6.16	Bond and Bond Forfeiture	13
6.17	Discovery	13
6.18	Docket Calls and Announcements	13
6.19	Continuance, Resettings, and Postponements	13
6.20	Plea Bargains	13
6.21	Guilty Pleas/Nolo Contendre/Open Pleas	13
6.22	Speedy Trial	14
6.23	Motions/Pre-trial Hearings/Pre-trial Matters	14
6.24	Settings/Schedules	14
6.25	Order of Trials/Preferential Settings/Conflicting Engagements	15
6.25a	Preferential Settings	15

6.25b	Conflicting Engagements	15
6.26	Witnesses/Evidence	15
6.27	Non-Jury Trials	16
6.28	Jury Trials	16
6.29	Jury Selection/Voir Dire	16
6.30	Probation Applications/Deferred Adjudication	16
6.31	Pre-Sentence Report	16
6.32	Judgments/Orders	16
6.33	Occupational Driver's License	16
6.34	Probation Revocations/Motions to Adjudicate/Habeas Corpus	16
6.35	Appeals from Lower Courts	16
Rule 7	Management of Juries	16
7.10	Management of Juries	16
Rule 8	Judicial Vacation	16
8.10	Judicial Vacation	16
	Notification of Local Administrative	
8.11	Judge of Absence or Planned Vacation of Judge	16
8.12	Requests for Visiting Judge	17
Rule 9	Non-Judicial Personnel	17
9.10	Non -Judicial Personnel	17
9.11	Qualifications of Non-Judicial Personnel	17
9.12	Conduct of Non-Judicial Personnel	17
9.13	Duties of Non-Judicial Personnel	17
9.13a	Jury Coordinator	17
Rule 10	Attorneys of Record	17
10.10	Appearance of Counsel; Designation of Attorney in Charge	18
10.11	Conduct and Decorum of Counsel	18
10.12	Withdrawal of Counsel	18
10.13	Attorney Vacations	18
Rule 11	Administrative Law Cases	19
11.10	Administrative Law Cases	19

Rule 12	Miscellaneous Local rules	19
12.10	Settlement Week	19
12.11	Form for Submitting Court Costs	19
12.12	Form for Requesting Alternate Dispute Resolution	19
 Rule 13	 Adoption, Amendment, Notice	 19
13.10	Procedure for Adoption and Amendment of Local Rules	19
13.11	Adoption or Amendment by Local Administrative Judge	19
13.12	Notice and Publication fo Rules	20
13.13	Interim Orders Affecting Local Practice	20
13.14	Local Practice Not Published in These Rules	20

**RULE 1.
GENERAL PROVISIONS**

1.10 Time Standards for Case Disposition

Each court shall, so far as reasonably possible, ensure that all cases are brought to trial or final disposition in conformity with the Rules of Judicial Administration promulgated by the Supreme Court of Texas.

1.11 Terms of Court; Annual Calendars; Weeks Not in Session; Holidays

a. Terms of Court; Weeks Not in Session.

The courts of Brazos County have successive terms and are in session every week of the year.

b. Annual Calendars.

(1) District Courts. Each district court shall determine its own annual calendar.

(2) County Courts at Law. Each county court at law shall determine its own annual calendar.

(3) Magistrates, Referees, and Court Masters. The judges of the district courts and county courts at law shall coordinate the schedules of the magistrates, referees and associate judges authorized to hear cases in this county in a manner designed to maximize the utilization of personnel and facilities available.

c. Holidays. The courts of Brazos County will observe those holidays set and published a reasonable time in advance by the Commissioners Court of Brazos County.

1.12 Hours of Court Proceedings

Normal court proceedings shall, as far as reasonably possible, be conducted between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m., Mondays through Fridays.

1.13 Emergency and Special Sessions

Each court may convene at any time in the judge's discretion for emergency or special sessions, upon reasonable notice to the parties or attorneys of record.

1.14 Jury/Non-jury Weeks

a. District Courts. The district courts shall, to the extent possible, coordinate the designation of civil jury, criminal jury and bench weeks between the three district courts such that each district court hears a different subject-matter each week.

b. County Courts at Law. Jury and non-jury trial weeks or days may be designated by the judge of each county court at law.

RULE 2.

LOCAL ADMINISTRATIVE JUDGE

2.10 Powers and Duties of Local Administrative Judge

The local administrative judge shall have those powers and duties provided by Section 74.092 of the Texas Government Code and that may be provided by other law or rule.

2.11. Information to Local Administrative Judge

Each court shall provide the local administrative judge such information as may be required to fulfill the duties of such office.

2.12. Exercise of Powers in Absence

In the event of the absence of the local administrative judge, the judge who last held the office may exercise the power of such office in an emergency.

RULE 3.

CIVIL CASES

3.10 Filing and Assignment of Cases

a. Cases within Exclusive Jurisdiction of the County Courts at Law. All civil cases within the exclusive jurisdiction of the county courts at law (i.e., all probate, mental illness, appeals from justice and municipal courts, and civil cases where the amount in controversy is less than \$500 but more than \$200) and condemnation cases (where title to the subject property is not in question) shall be presented for filing to the County Clerk.

b. Cases within the Exclusive Jurisdiction of the District Courts. All civil cases within the exclusive jurisdiction of the district courts shall be presented for filing to the District Clerk.

c. Concurrent Civil Jurisdiction Cases. All civil cases within the concurrent civil jurisdiction of the district courts and county

courts at law (i.e., civil cases when the matter in controversy exceeds \$500 and does not exceed \$100,000, exclusive of interest, and all family law matters) shall be presented for filing to the District Clerk.

d. Assignment of Cases.

(1) All cases within the exclusive jurisdiction of the district courts shall be randomly assigned to a district court.

(2) All cases within the exclusive jurisdiction of the county courts at law shall be randomly assigned to a county court at law.

(3) All cases within the concurrent jurisdiction of the district courts and county courts at law shall be randomly assigned and equally distributed among the district courts

and county courts at law, subject to the following limitations:

(a) All juvenile cases shall be assigned to the 272nd District Court.

(b) All Title IV-D cases (as defined by the Texas Family Code) shall be assigned to a district court.

(4) To assure randomness of assignment, if a party dismisses or non-suits a case and refiles it within one year after dismissal, it will be reassigned to the court in which it was pending at the time of dismissal or non-suit.

(5) This rule 3.10(d) will apply to all newly filed cases in Brazos County, those transferred to Brazos County on change of venue, and those cases in Brazos County ordered reassigned by a recusing or transferring judge. Nothing herein will prevent judges from exchanging benches, sitting for another judge, or transferring cases between themselves, when allowed by law or these local rules.

3.11 Filing on Holidays

No local rule under this subdivision.

3.12 Transfer of Cases; Docket Exchange; Bench Exchange

a. If a judge determines, either sua sponte or upon motion, that his or her court does not have subject-matter jurisdiction over a case, but venue appears proper in Brazos County, the judge shall transfer the case by written order to the appropriate clerk for reassignment to a court in this county which has subject-matter jurisdiction.

b. A civil case may be transferred from one court to another having jurisdiction:

(1) upon motion of a party, for good cause shown;

(2) in the event the judge is disqualified to hear or recuses himself or herself from hearing the case;

(3) when the case should be transferred in the interest of justice;

(4) to facilitate docket control as provided by law or by court rules; or

(5) when at least one common party and substantially similar questions of fact or law appear in each case in two or more courts (in which situation, the case having the higher cause number shall be transferred to the court having jurisdiction over the case with the lowest cause number.

(6) in family law cases when another court has previously exercised jurisdiction over any member of the family (All applications for protective orders and Title IV-D cases) should be transferred to the court having continuing exclusive jurisdiction).

c. No case may be transferred under paragraph (a) or (b) above except upon the consent of the judge of the court to which the case is being transferred.

3.13 Request for Settings--Non-Jury

a. **Submission for Ruling without Hearing.** Upon the filing of any matter, the Movant or the court may give notice to all attorneys of record and parties pro se that the matter will be submitted to the court for a

ruling without any hearing. The notice shall Upon the filing of any matter, the Movant or the court may give notice to all attorneys of record and parties pro se that the matter will be submitted to the court for a ruling without any hearing. The notice shall clearly state that any party may either request a hearing or submit a written response on or before a specific submission date that is at least ten (10) days after service of such statement. If no hearing is requested prior to the submission date contained in the notice, the court, in the absence of counsel, shall examine the pleadings, authorities cited, and other papers submitted. After such examination the court may either set the matter for a hearing or make such rulings as the court deems proper, note a memorandum of such ruling among the papers of the case and send copies of such memorandum to all attorneys of record and parties pro se. Submission of orders, judgments or other documents necessary to effectuate the memorandum ruling of the court shall be accomplished in accordance with Rule 3.43.

b. Contested Hearings

(1) Any party or attorney of record may obtain a setting of any contested proceeding by filing a Setting Request (furnished by the clerk, court coordinator, or in a form substantially similar to the form in Appendix). Each Setting Request shall be filed with the clerk of the court, who shall promptly transmit the setting request to the Court Coordinator of the appropriate court. Each Setting Request shall specify:

(a) the cause number and style of the case;

(b) the nature of the hearing, trial or ruling sought;

(c) the name, address and telephone number of each attorney of record or party pro se;

(d) the amount of time estimated by the requesting party to be required for such hearing for both sides. Each attorney or party is cautioned to give careful attention to the amount of time requested, as other cases may be set at the conclusion of the estimated time period.

(2) The attorney or party filing the setting request shall mail or deliver to all attorneys of record and all parties pro se in the case a copy of the setting request. The original setting request shall be retained with the original papers in the court's file.

(3) The court coordinator shall mail a Notice of Setting to each attorney of record and party pro se at the address shown on the Setting Request. The Notice of Setting shall state the date, hour, nature of the trial or hearing set, and the allotted time. Failure of the requesting attorney or party pro se to accurately state the names and addresses of opposing counsel or party pro se shall be ground for a continuance on the motion of an attorney of record or party pro se who did not receive the Notice of Setting within a reasonable time prior to the hearing date.

(4) The setting specified in the Notice of Setting shall remain tentative for a period of ten (10) calendar days after the same is mailed by the court coordinator. During such period, any attorney may notify the court coordinator of a conflict of settings or other scheduling conflict. Upon receipt of a signed

certificate setting forth the nature and extent of the conflict and with the approval of the court, the court coordinator may reset such cause to another tentative date or time. After the expiration of the ten (10) day period specified above, the setting shall become final.

c. Telephone hearings

(1) When a setting has been given for a hearing that does not involve the presentation of evidence, the court will consider requests for an attorney to appear by telephone. Attorneys are encouraged to request telephone hearings in appropriate cases.

(2) To request a telephone hearing, contact the court coordinator, which may be by telephone, facsimile transmission, or e-mail, and give notice of your request to all other attorneys of record as soon as possible before the hearing. Notice to opposing counsel must be by lawyer-to-lawyer conversation if by phone, and if written, must be given a sufficient time in advance to provide reasonable assurance of delivery.

(3) Any attorney objecting to the requested telephone hearing should make the reasons for objection known to the court coordinator as soon as possible before the hearing. The court will rule on the request and any objections without a hearing as early as possible that afternoon. It is the responsibility of the attorneys to call the court coordinator to ascertain if the request has been granted or refused.

(4) The requesting party will initiate the call to the court coordinator who will make the necessary transfer to the courtroom or

chambers. A speaker phone will be used when a record is requested by any party.

3.14 Disposition of Uncontested Matters

Requests for hearing uncontested matters and ex parte matters may be made in person, by telephone or in writing to the court coordinator for the court in which the matter is pending. The court coordinator will set the matter for the next available uncontested docket or at any other time that may be convenient to the parties and the court. The requesting party shall, when required by these rules or other applicable law, notify all attorneys of record or parties pro se of such setting.

3.15 Request for Settings—Jury

Any attorney of record or party pro se may request a jury trial setting in the manner specified by Rule 3.13b above.

3.16 Jury Fee and Jury Demand

No civil case shall be set for a jury trial unless a jury setting request is filed and the proper jury fee is paid not later than thirty (30) days before the date the case is set for bench trial.

3.17 Docket Calls and Announcements

All attorneys of record and parties pro se are expected to appear at all docket calls unless the Notice of Setting specifies otherwise.

3.18 Assignment of Cases for Trial

No local rule under this subdivision.

3.19 Conflicting Settings and Assignments of Counsel

a. Attorney already in trial in another court.

(1) When informed that an attorney is presently in trial, the Court will determine where and when assigned. This information will be verified upon request of opposing counsel or party pro se. The case will be placed on "hold" or reset, depending upon when the attorney will actually be released.

(2) If the attorney is not actually in trial as represented by the attorney or agent, the case will be tried without further notice.

b. Attorney assigned to two courts for the same date.

(1) It is the duty of the attorney to call the affected judge's attention to all dual settings as soon as they are known.

(2) Insofar as practicable, judges should attempt to agree on which case has priority; otherwise, the following priorities shall be observed by the judges of the respective courts:

(I) Criminal cases in which the defendant is in jail, whether initial case or on probation revocation

(II) All other criminal cases

(III) Cases given preference by statute

(IV) Preferentially set cases

(V) Case with earliest filing date

(VI) Case set at earliest date

(VII) Courts in metropolitan county areas should yield to Courts in rural county areas in all other instances of conflicting settings.

(VIII) In the event of unresolved conflict between two judges, the issue will be decided by the Local Administrative Judge or the Regional Presiding Judge.

3.20 Preferential Settings

a. Preferential settings may be granted in the following cases:

(1) those entitled to preferential setting by law;

(2) those in which there are out-of-county parties or witnesses; or

(3) those in which it is shown that manifest hardship would be imposed upon any litigant or a material witness if a preferential setting is not granted.

b. Unless otherwise provided or required by law, a preferential setting shall be granted only after hearing, if requested by any party, upon motion, duly verified, setting forth the reason that the preferential setting is necessary.

3.21 Resettings

No setting shall be passed except by :

a. settlement agreement announced in open court or in writing complying with Rule 11 of the Texas Rules of Civil Procedure;

b. written agreement of all parties with court's approval; or

c. a motion for continuance granted by the Court.

3.22 Dismissal Docket; Involuntary Dismissal

a. Cases which have not been disposed within the time limits set forth in the Texas Rules of Judicial Administration may be dismissed for want of prosecution. Notice of intention to dismiss shall be given in accordance with Rule 165a of the Texas Rules of Civil Procedure to all attorneys of record and parties pro se whose addresses are shown on the docket or in the papers on file.

b. Unless good cause is shown as required in the notice, such cases will be dismissed on or after the date stated therein. Postcard notification of the dismissal order shall be as provided in Rule 306a of the Texas Rules of Civil Procedure.

3.23 Suspense Docket

No local rule under this subdivision.

3.24 Hearings of Pre-trial Pleas and Motions

Any attorney of record or party pro se may request a hearing of any pre-trial plea or motion any reasonable length of time prior to trial on the merits unless otherwise provided by pre-trial order. Hearings should be requested using the procedure provided in Rule 3.13 of these rules.

3.25 Attorney Conference Requirement and Procedures

No local rule under this subdivision.

3.26 Non-compliance with Conference Procedures.

No local rule under this subdivision.

3.27 Discovery Disputes

All counsel are expected to engage in good faith negotiations for the settlement of discovery disputes prior to requesting a hearing to resolve such disputes.

3.28 Severances

No local rule under this subdivision.

3.29 Continuances

No local rule under this subdivision.

3.30 Default Judgments

No local rule under this subdivision.

3.31 Summary Judgments

No local rule under this subdivision.

3.32 Ancillary Proceedings

No local rule under this subdivision.

3.33 Complex Case Designation

No local rule under this subdivision.

3.34 Alternative Dispute Resolution

No local rule under this subdivision.

3.35 Pre-Trial and Scheduling Conferences

a. Any party may request that the case be set for a pre-trial hearing. A pre-trial hearing may also be set on the court's own motion and may be made a prerequisite to any trial setting in the case.

b. At the pre-trial hearing, the court may hear and consider any pre-trial matter contemplated by Rule 166 of the Texas Rules of Civil Procedure and such other matters as the court may direct.

3.36 Certificate of Progress; Proposed Preparation Plan

No local rule under this subdivision.

3.37 Trial Stipulations and Admissions

No local rule under this subdivision.

3.38 Trial Witnesses and Exhibits

No local rule under this subdivision.

3.39 Disposition Conferences

No local rule under this subdivision.

3.40 Settlements

No local rule under this subdivision.

3.41 Jury Selection

No local rule under this subdivision.

3.42 Jury Charge, Questions and Instructions

No local rule under this subdivision.

3.43 Submission of Orders, Judgments and Instruments

a. After a ruling, the attorney directed shall prepare the form of the document to be entered in duplicate originals. On the same date the document is mailed or presented to the court coordinator, the duplicate of the document shall be mailed or delivered to opposing counsel and parties pro se to provide an opportunity to approve or object to the form of the document or that the document is inconsistent with the court's ruling (i.e., not a reargument of the merits).

b. If no written objection is received by the court coordinator within ten (10) calendar days after the original was received, the court coordinator shall submit the document to the court for signature.

c. All objections to the form or substance of a document submitted shall have the objecting party's proposed document for the court's signature attached. Upon receipt of objections, the court coordinator shall present the documents and all objections to the court for determination. The court may determine the issue with or without a hearing in its discretion. For good cause, the court may change the deadline for preparation and filing of a document and objections.

d. All judgments and orders in uncontested matters (except cases which are settled on the hearing date) shall be presented at the time of hearing on such matters, except for good cause shown.

e. If the court coordinator has not received a proposed judgment or order finally disposing of a case within thirty (30) days after decision by the court, the judge or the court coordinator shall send notice of intent to dismiss the case for want of prosecution to each attorney and pro se litigant in the case and present an Order of Dismissal with prejudice to the court. Court costs may be taxed in the court's discretion.

3.44 Withdrawal and Copying of Documents

No local rule under this subdivision.

3.45 Other Local Rules

No local rule under this subdivision.

RULE 4. FAMILY LAW CASES

4.10 Time Standards for Family Law Case Disposition.

No local rule under this subdivision.

4.11 Ancillary Proceedings, Temporary Orders, and Emergency Matters

In the event a bona fide emergency exists or a matter requires special attention and the judge of the court where the case is pending is unavailable, the attorney or party seeking relief shall contact any judge who has jurisdiction and the judge can consider the matter, but the case shall remain in the court originally filed.

4.12 Disposition Proposals

a. To expedite disposition, it shall be the duty of each attorney to confer, prior to trial, with each other attorney regarding settlement, stipulations, estimated time of trial, waiver of jury, the extent, description, character and value of the property in question, amount of support, amount of monthly income,

conservatorship, periods of possession and/or access, rights, duties and powers of the conservators, and contested issues.

b. Each attorney shall submit a Proposed Property Division (form furnished by the clerk, court coordinator or see Appendix for form) including property claimed or recognized as separate property, to the court and opposing counsel not later than the commencement of trial.

4.13 Uncontested Matters

Requests for hearing uncontested matters and ex parte matters may be made in person, by telephone or in writing to the court coordinator for the court in which the matter is pending. The court coordinator will set the matter for the next available uncontested docket or at any other time that may be convenient to the parties and the court. The requesting party shall, when required by these rules or other applicable law, notify all attorneys of record or parties pro se of such setting.

4.14 Financial Information Statements

A Financial Information Statement (furnished by the clerk, court coordinator or see Appendix for form) shall be furnished to the Court and opposing counsel not later than the commencement of a hearing or trial in which the payment of support or property rights will be an issue.

4.15 Child Support Guidelines

The amount of child support payable by the obligor parent in accordance with the current Child Support Guidelines adopted by the Supreme Court of Texas are presumptively reasonable.

4.16 Possessory Conservator Visitation Guidelines

The courts of Brazos County utilize the Standard Possession Order provided in Texas Family Code Chapter 153, Subchapters E and

F in determining the appropriate periods of possession.

4.17 Inventory and Appraisement.

No local rule under this subdivision.

4.18 Ad Litem Appointments

The attorneys requesting appointment of attorneys and guardians ad litem may recommend a suitable, qualified person for such appointment. Proposed orders of appointment should accompany each such request.

4.19 Mediation Counseling

No local rule under this subdivision.

4.20 Referral to Master

No local rule under this subdivision.

RULE 5. LIQUIDATED CLAIMS

5.10 Liquidated Monetary Claims

Whenever a claim is liquidated and proved by an instrument in writing and the plaintiff is entitled to default judgment, the plaintiff may present a prepared judgment and certificate of last known address, together with a non-military affidavit and an affidavit for attorney's fees, if appropriate, to the court for signature without a hearing. If the court is satisfied that all legal prerequisites have been met, the court may enter judgment without the necessity for a personal appearance.

5.11 Certification for Suspense Docket.

No local rule under this subdivision.

5.12 Application to Defer Entry of Judgment

No local rule under this subdivision.

5.13 Certification that Payment Agreement Continues in Effect.

No local rule under this subdivision.

RULE 6.

CRIMINAL CASES

6.10 Felony and Misdemeanor Cases

a. Pre-filing documents.

(1) The prosecuting attorney's office is responsible for maintaining custody of the following original documents relating to an arrest or charge for a Class A or B misdemeanor or any felony offense until an information or indictment has been filed:

(a) Bonds. The prosecuting attorney shall collect original bonds from the Sheriff daily.

(b) Magistrate's Warning.

(i) If an incarcerated defendant has not requested appointment of counsel, the completed original Magistrate's Warning will be collected from the magistrate by the prosecuting attorney immediately after completion of the warning.

(ii) If an incarcerated defendant has requested appointment of counsel, the completed original Magistrate's Warning shall be delivered to the prosecuting attorney after the magistrate has determined the indigency of the defendant and appointed counsel for the defendant, if found to be indigent.

(c) Applications for Court Appointed Attorneys, Affidavits of Indigency and orders relating to appointment of counsel entered prior to filing case with County or District Clerk. All original applications for court appointed counsel, affidavits of indigency and

any orders entered prior to the filing of a case relating to appointment of counsel or determination of indigency shall be delivered to the prosecuting attorney after the magistrate has completed the determination of indigency and appointment of counsel.

(d) Other. Miscellaneous documents relating to the defendant's case (e.g., applications for probation, letters from attorneys, etc.) will be forwarded to the prosecuting attorney upon receipt.

(2) Upon filing of the information or indictment, all of the above documents will be filed by the prosecuting attorney with the District Clerk for placement in the clerk's file.

(3) Magistrate's warnings and bonds made after arrests in other cases where there is already an open clerk's file (e.g., arrests after motion to revoke/proceed or after *capias* is issued in connection with bond forfeiture) will be filed by the prosecuting attorney with the appropriate clerk for placement in the clerk's file.

(4) After documents are filed with the clerk as described above, the clerk will forward the file to the appropriate court coordinator.

b. Transfer of Cases.

Subject to the approval of the transferee judge, any criminal case may be transferred to another court having jurisdiction by written order.

6.11 Grand Jury

No local rule under this subdivision.

6.12 Filings/Return of Indictments

a. All felony and Class A and B misdemeanor cases within the jurisdiction of the district courts and county courts at law shall be presented for filing in the Office of the District Clerk. All appeals from Class C misdemeanors within the exclusive jurisdiction of the county courts at law shall be presented for filing in the Office of the County Clerk.

b. The clerk shall assign to a district court the following criminal cases:

(1) Felonies;

(2) Misdemeanors involving official misconduct; and

(3) Class A and B Misdemeanors involving a defendant with pending felony charges.

Subject to the following overriding considerations, all other Class A and B misdemeanors and all appeals from Class C misdemeanors shall be randomly assigned to a county court at law.

c. **Assignment of cases.** Except as may be otherwise specified by court order, by agreement of the judges, or provided by law or these rules, all cases presented to the district clerk for filing will be assigned in equal number among the district courts and in equal number among the county courts at law, on a random basis, subject to the following

considerations that override the random assignment requirement:

(1) If there are co-defendants with charges arising out of the same criminal transaction, the clerk shall assign all co-defendant's cases to the same court. All separate felony cases involving the same defendant, whether arising from the same criminal transaction or not, shall be assigned to the same court.

(2) If a defendant has an original case, motion to revoke, or motion to proceed pending before a district court, any new case(s) shall be assigned to the same court.

(3) If a defendant has an original case, motion to revoke, or motion to proceed pending before a county court at law, and an original felony case, motion to revoke or motion to proceed is subsequently randomly filed in district court, the case(s) pending in the county court at law shall be transferred by the county court at law to the district court in which the felony case was randomly filed.

(4) When a defendant has been the subject of a case relating to a criminal matter, but filed as a civil case (e.g., habeas corpus, motion for bond reduction, or petition for forfeiture of property), any criminal case(s) against that defendant and related to the same criminal transaction shall be assigned to the court to which the civil case was assigned, provided the court has subject matter jurisdiction.

(5) Conflicts between these rules for assignment of cases shall be resolved as follows:

(i) All co-defendants' cases shall be assigned to the court first assigned another

co-defendant's case according to these rules, even though another co-defendant may have a motion to revoke, motion to proceed, or related civil case pending before another district court.

(ii) If the county court at law does not have jurisdiction to determine the matter that should be transferred, the county court at law may consider transferring the pending case to the district court if the district court would have jurisdiction over all pending cases related to a defendant or all co-defendants.

(iii) For any other circumstances not specifically addressed in this rule, it is the expressed intent of the courts that, within the limitations of subject-matter jurisdiction, all criminal cases relating to a single defendant or co-defendants be heard and determined in only one court and these rules shall be liberally construed to carry that intent into effect.

(6) When the district clerk erroneously assigns a criminal or civil case in conflict with the above rules, the affected courts may transfer the case to conform with these rules. However, nothing herein shall affect the otherwise lawful jurisdiction of a court to which a case is assigned.

6.13 Arraignment/Initial Appearance

Unless specifically retained by the court to which a case is assigned, all non-capital criminal cases are, by these rules, referred to the County Magistrate for the purpose of all determinations of indigency, appointment of counsel, and arraignment.

6.14 Appointment of Counsel

Determinations of indigency and appointment of counsel shall be made in accordance with the current Brazos County Indigent Defense Plan.

6.15 Appearance of Defendant and Counsel/Court Attendance

No local rule under this subdivision.

6.16 Bond and Bond Forfeiture

No local rule under this subdivision.

6.17 Discovery

No local rule under this subdivision.

6.18 Docket Calls/Announcements

No local rule under this subdivision.

6.19 Continuance, Resettings, and Postponements

No setting shall be passed or reset except by:

a. written agreement of all parties with court's approval; or

b. a motion for continuance granted by the Court.

6.20 Plea Bargains

No local rule under this subdivision.

6.21 Guilty Pleas/Nolo Contendre/Open Pleas

The County Magistrate may hear and accept a plea of guilty or nolo contendere in any non-

capital criminal case pending in any county court at law or district court without the necessity of a separate order of referral.

6.22 Speedy Trial

No local rule under this subdivision.

6.23 Motions/Pre-trial Hearings/Pre-trial Matters.

All pre-trial hearings shall be conducted in accordance with Article 28.01 of the Texas Code of Criminal Procedure.

6.24 Settings/Schedules

a. Any pro se defendant or attorney of record may obtain a setting of any contested proceeding by filing a Setting Request (furnished by the clerk, court coordinator, or in a form substantially similar to the form in Appendix). Each Setting Request shall be filed with the clerk of the court and shall specify:

(1) the cause number and style of the case;

(2) the nature of the hearing, trial or ruling sought;

(3) the name, address and telephone number of each attorney of record, each defendant, and the name of defendant's surety bondsman, if applicable;

(4) the amount of time estimated by the requesting party to be required for such hearing for both sides. Each attorney or party is cautioned to give careful attention to the amount of time requested, as other cases may be set at the conclusion of the estimated time period.

b. The attorney or party filing the setting request shall mail or deliver to all attorneys of record and all parties pro se in the case a copy of the setting request. The original setting request shall be retained with the original papers in the court's file.

c. The court coordinator shall mail a Notice of Setting to each attorney of record, to each defendant, and to the defendant's surety bondsman at the address shown on the Setting Request. The Notice of Setting shall state the date, hour, nature of the trial or hearing set, and the allotted time. Failure of the requesting attorney to accurately state the names and addresses of opposing counsel shall be grounds for a continuance on the motion of an attorney of record who did not receive the Notice of Setting within a reasonable time prior to the hearing date.

d. If the date specified in the Notice of Setting is at least fourteen (14) calendar days from the date the Notice of Setting was sent, the setting specified in the Notice of Setting shall remain tentative for a period of ten (10) calendar days after the same is mailed by the court coordinator. During such period, any attorney may notify the court coordinator of a conflict of settings or other scheduling conflict. Upon receipt of a signed certificate setting forth the nature and extent of the conflict and with the approval of the court, the court coordinator may reset such cause to another tentative date or time. After the expiration of the ten (10) day period specified above, the setting shall become final, and may only be continued, reset or postponed in accordance with these rules.

e. If the date specified in the Notice of Setting is less than fourteen (14) calendar days from the date the Notice of Setting was

sent, the setting specified in the Notice of setting is immediately final and may only be continued, reset or postponed in accordance with these rules.

6.25 Order of Trials/Preferential Settings/Conflicting Engagements

a. Preferential settings.

(1) Preferential settings may be granted in the following cases:

(a) those entitled to preferential setting by law;

(b) those in which there are out of county parties or witnesses; or

(c) those in which it is shown that manifest hardship would be imposed upon any litigant or material witness if a preferential setting is not granted.

b. Conflicting Engagements

(1) Attorney already in trial in another court.

(a) When informed that an attorney is presently in trial, the Court will determine where and when assigned. This information may be verified by the court and will be verified upon request of opposing counsel or party pro se. The case will be placed on "hold" or reset, depending upon when the attorney will actually be released.

(b) If the attorney is not actually in trial as represented by the attorney or agent, the case will be tried without further notice.

(2) Attorney assigned to two courts for the same date.

(a) It is the duty of the attorney to call the affected judge's attention to all dual settings as soon as they are known.

(b) Insofar as practicable, judges should attempt to agree on which case has priority; otherwise, the following priorities shall be observed by the judges of the respective courts:

(i) Criminal cases in which the defendant is in jail, whether initial case or on probation revocation;

(ii) All other criminal cases;

(iii) Cases given preference by statute;

(iv) Preferentially set cases;

(v) Case set at earliest date;

(vi) Case with earliest filing date;

(vii) Courts in metropolitan county areas should yield to Courts in rural county areas in all other instances of conflicting settings.

(viii) In the event of unresolved conflict between two judges, the issue will be decided by the Local Administrative Judge or the Regional Presiding Judge.

6.26 Witnesses/Evidence

The State and Defendant will be limited to no more than five (5) character witnesses per defendant, except for good cause shown.

6.27 Non-Jury Trials

No local rule under this subdivision.

6.28 Jury Trials

No local rule under this subdivision.

6.29 Jury Selection/Voir Dire

No local rule under this subdivision.

6.30 Probation Applications/Deferred Adjudication

No local rule under this subdivision.

6.31 Pre-Sentence Report

No local rule under this subdivision.

6.32 Judgments/Orders

No local rule under this subdivision.

6.33 Occupational Driver's License

Whenever a suspension of a person's driver's license was by order of any district or county court at law in this county, any petition for occupational driver's license may be heard only in the court which originally suspended the license.

6.34 Probation Revocations/Motions to Adjudicate/Habeas Corpus

No local rule under this subdivision.

6.35 Appeals from Lower Courts

No local rule under this subdivision.

**RULE 7.
MANAGEMENT OF JURIES**

7.10 Management of Juries

No local rule under this subdivision.

**RULE 8.
JUDICIAL VACATION**

8.10 Judicial Vacation

The judges of the courts of record shall arrange their vacation schedules in such a manner that the county will not be left without a judge capable of hearing cases within the jurisdiction of each court.

8.11 Notification of Local Administrative Judge of Absence or Planned Vacation of Judge

The judges of the courts of record should notify the Local Administrative Judge of any absence or planned vacation of the judge as

soon as practicable prior to the absence or vacation.

8.12 Requests for Visiting Judge

All requests for assignment of a visiting judge must be first delivered to the Local Administrative Judge. If the Local

Administrative Judge determines that the requesting judge's docket for those dates might be handled by another court in this county, the Local Administrative Judge shall consult with the requesting judge and the judge who might handle the matter prior to forwarding the request for assignment to the Regional Presiding Judge.

RULE 9. NON-JUDICIAL PERSONNEL

9.10 Non-Judicial Personnel

No local rule under this subdivision.

9.11 Qualifications of Non-Judicial Personnel

No local rule under this subdivision.

9.12 Conduct of Non-Judicial Personnel

No local rule under this subdivision.

9.13 Duties of Non-Judicial Personnel

a. Jury Coordinator. The Jury Coordinator shall:

(1) direct and coordinate all petit jury panels and special venire and any other type jury function as directed by the courts;

(2) hire and discharge employees of the Office of Jury Coordinator, with the

concurrence of the judges of the district courts and county courts at law;

(3) supervise employees of the Office of Jury Coordinator, with the concurrence of the judges of the district courts and county courts at law;

(4) provide all necessary functions instant to efficient jury management;

(5) report to the judges of the district courts and county courts at law as necessary or directed.

(6) prepare the budget and maintain other internal records of the Office of Jury Coordinator necessary for efficient jury coordination; and

(7) such other duties deemed necessary by the judges of the district courts and the county courts at law.

RULE 10.

ATTORNEYS OF RECORD

10.10 Appearance of Counsel; Designation of Attorney in Charge

No local rule under this subdivision.

10.11 Conduct and Decorum of Counsel

a. Each attorney is expected to conduct himself or herself in accordance with the State Bar of Texas Code of Professional Responsibility, the Texas Rules of Civil Procedure, the Texas Code of Criminal Procedure, the Regional Rules of Administration for the Second Administrative Region, these local rules, and such other rules of conduct as may be published by the courts of this county and state. All attorneys, litigants, and witnesses shall be expected to act in a manner calculated to promote decorum, respect for the judicial system, and the prompt and fair administration of justice.

b. Attorneys shall be responsible for advising their clients and witnesses of the formalities of the courts.

c. All officers of the court are expected to be prompt, prepared, and appropriately dressed in business attire.

d. The taking of photographs, the making of video or audio recordings, or the broadcasting of any judicial proceeding in or from any courtroom, or so close thereto as to disturb the order and decorum of the court, either while court is in session or at recess, is prohibited, unless prior permission is granted by the court.

e. Each court shall enforce all breaches of conduct by any appropriate action.

10.12 Withdrawal of Counsel

No attorney of record shall be permitted to withdraw from any case without presenting a motion to withdraw and obtaining from the court an order granting leave to withdraw. No motion to withdraw will be entertained by the court unless it includes a certificate of the client's last known address. If withdrawal is without the written consent of the client, the withdrawing attorney shall forward to his client by certified mail notification of the client's right to object to the motion and the client's right to request a hearing on the client's objection together with a copy of his or her motion to withdraw and a copy of the request for setting or notice of submission without a hearing. A copy of the motion to withdraw and request for setting or notice of submission without a hearing shall be delivered or mailed to any opposing counsel. Leave to withdraw may be denied where the motion is presented so near the trial date as to require delay of the trial. After leave is granted, the withdrawing attorney shall send the client a copy of the order granting leave to withdraw by certified mail. A copy of the order shall then be sent to opposing counsel.

10.13 Attorney Vacations

Each attorney desiring to assure that he will not be assigned for trial during a vacation period not to exceed four (4) consecutive weeks of a given year may advise the court coordinator in writing not less than ninety

(90) days prior to the first day of such vacation. In the event an attorney already has a setting at the time the vacation notice is filed, it shall be the attorney's responsibility to

notify opposing counsel and the court coordinator and either file an agreed reset for approval by the court or a motion for continuance and obtain a ruling by the court.

RULE 11. ADMINISTRATIVE LAW CASES

11.10 Administrative Law Cases

No local rule under this subdivision.

RULE 12. MISCELLANEOUS LOCAL RULES

12.10 Settlement Week

No local rule under this subdivision.

No local rule under this subdivision.

12.12 Form for Requesting Alternate Dispute Resolution

12.11 Form for Submitting Court Costs

No local rule under this subdivision.

RULE 13. ADOPTION, AMENDMENT, NOTICE

13.10 Procedure for Adoption and Amendment of Local Rules

The Local Rules of Administration of Brazos County may be adopted or amended by a majority vote of all judges of the district courts and the county courts at law.

13.11 Adoption or Amendment by Local Administrative Judge

The Local Administrative Judge may promulgate local rules of administration if the other judges do not act by majority vote; provided, however, the Local Administrative Judge may not promulgate such rules unless he or she has given each of the other judges at least thirty (30) days prior written notice of his or her intent to so act.

13.12 Notice and Publication of Rules

Once the local rules of administration or any amendments thereto have received the approval of the Texas Supreme Court, the rules or amendments shall be published and be made available to the Bar and the public.

13.13 Interim Orders Affecting Local Practice

The judges of the district and county courts at law may from time to time promulgate by

majority vote interim orders affecting local practice for the purpose of emergency action, testing of pilot programs, or other actions the judges deem reasonable and necessary.

13.14 Local Practice Not Published in These Rules

No local rule under this subdivision.

